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-- ANNUAL HEALTH REPORT --

BOROUGH OF FOWEY.

1 9 1 4.

*not
report for 100 years*

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE BOROUGH OF FOWEY,
1 9 1 4.

In November, 1913, the Borough Council of Fowey met for the first time after an interval of one hundred years. In those days little attention was paid to sanitation either by Local Authorities or by Government itself. This is, therefore, the first Health Report for the Borough of Fowey. The Borough is co-terminous with the Parish. The subsoil consists in the South of a lime-containing slate rock, and in the North of a series of variegated shales, the prevailing dip being great, and S.E. in direction. Both series belong to the Lower Devonian Era, which means they are older than the granites of the China Clay district. Both contain bands of volcanic tufa.

The East side of the parish is everywhere bounded by the steep descent to the Fowey river, which this ancient stream has worn down in the course of ages, a descent which gives charm and character to the town,

but adds greatly to the housing and sanitary difficulties with which we have to deal.

POPULATION : In 1901, the population was 2,258; in 1911, 2,280; estimated population for 1914 is 2,288. In 1911, there was an excess of 4 females. The chief industry is the China Clay export trade. There are some imports of coal and timber. There is no longer any ship-building. The China Clay loading is not an unhealthy occupation, though a thirsty one, the particles of clay being too fine to do much damage in passing through the lungs.

WATER SUPPLY : Water is obtained from the hilly districts N.E. of the parish. This is taken up by enclosed in-take tanks at Tresare, and thence by gravity to the reservoirs. The supply for the shipping comes from a lower level, the surplus of which is pumped to the higher level reservoirs. The system is one of two levels with connections. The higher level is supplied from the Windmill reservoirs; the lower from reservoirs below Tresare. There are still some houses which obtain their water from wells.

The character of the water is good, slightly under the average for hardness, and otherwise free from hurtful ingredients. Like all seaside waters, it contains a certain quantity of common salt.

DRAINAGE : The town drains into the harbour.

There are ^{seven} ~~six~~ main outfalls, viz., at Fowey Pill, ^{Passage} Bodinnoc Slip, Pottery Corner, Town Quay, ^{Whitford's Yd} Inch's Quay and Whitehouse. These are carried to dead low water tides. There are three tanks for flushing services. There are also a number of private drains discharging some at low water, others above low water.

SCAVENGING : Scavenging has hitherto been done by contract. A more efficient and punctual service is now being established. There is room for improvement in the matter of covered ash bins. Material is taken to sea in hoppers.

INSPECTIONS : There are three workshop bakeries, and 24 other registered workshops. Most of these have been inspected.

SCHOOLS : Both primary and secondary schools have been inspected, and are, on the whole, now satisfactory.

FOOD : Nearly the whole milk supply of the Borough is furnished by the parish. The milk supply was investigated by the M.O.H. early in the year, and some remarks made as to cream deficiency have led to improvement.

HOUSING : Especial mention was made at the local Enquiry in 1912 of lack of houses. It cannot be said that there are a number of grave cases of over-crowding, but, at present, the general conditions are not quite satisfactory. A number of workers are unable to obtain houses at all within reasonable distance of their work. This refers mostly, though not entirely, to workers on the jetties. A Committee was formed early in the year to enquire into this question, but it was felt that wartime was unsuitable to push it in Fowey. The problem could be best solved here by a suitable combination of people especially interested in it, rather than by

public action. There are three or four possible sites for building, which should be easily obtainable.

SANITARY WORK OF THE YEAR : Necessarily, the work in this first year has been largely one of preparation. The Health Staff consists of M.O.H., salary £25, and Sanitary Inspector, salary £80, who is also the Surveyor. In December, 1913, Mr. Warne was appointed to the latter post, but was replaced by Mr. Northcote in September, 1914. The extensive knowledge of local conditions possessed by Mr. Northcote has, since his appointment, been of great value to the Borough. A careful examination of the milk supply was made early in the year, and suggestions made as to improvement. Enquiries were made in connection with a destructor, but the question has been postponed. There is need of some means of disinfecting material exposed to infection, and it is to be hoped the subject will occupy attention in the near future. Early in December, the XII. Worcesters were quartered in Fowey, and, for a time, the strain on the newly organised Health Department was extreme, but the

arrangements have worked well, and though there has been much sickness amongst troops, there have been, so far, no fatal cases.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE : Three cases of enteric fever have occurred, all amongst sailors in the port. These have been treated at the Cottage Hospital. It is a singular fact that no cases of enteric fever have occurred amongst residents since 1890. There have been, practically, no notifications of tuberculosis, only one of diphtheria and two of erysipelas. One of the latter was a soldier. A Sub-Committee was appointed to decide whether the Borough should combine with St. Austell in supporting a joint Isolation Hospital. Their report was adverse.

VITAL STATISTICS :

Births :	Male	14
	Female	15
	Total	<u>29</u>

Birth rate : 12.7 per thousand.

Deaths :	Male	10	including 1 transferable death and 2 inquest cases
	Female	8	
	Total	<u>18</u>	

Nett death rate : 7.86 per thousand.
Corrected death rate : 7.59 " "

The deaths in 1913 were 29, death rate 12.7.
The year 1914 has, therefore, an exceptionally
low death rate.

No conclusion can be drawn as to the average
rates of a small place like Fowey from the above
figures. Indeed, several years must elapse before
we can obtain any such rates.

There were three deaths of infants under twelve
months, giving an infantile death rate of $103\frac{3}{4}$ per
thousand. If we subtract the deaths of premature
twins, the infantile death rate becomes infinitesi-
mal. There is no doubt the infantile mortality in
Fowey is always low.

It should be noted that the above rates are
based on the Census returns for Fowey for 1911, and
on the figures given in the Monthly Sheets issued
by the County M.O.H. It is not clear whether this
includes the entire population of the Parish or
only the township.

There is, at present, no laboratory for the
health work of the Borough, though the M.O.H. is
prepared to report on swabs, sputum or other

pathological material submitted. It is hoped that such a laboratory may, at some future date, be arranged in connection with the new Cottage Hospital which was opened in September.

D.P.H.

M.O.H. Borough of Fowey.

